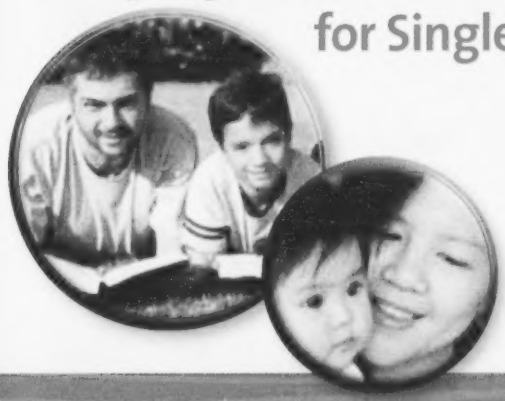
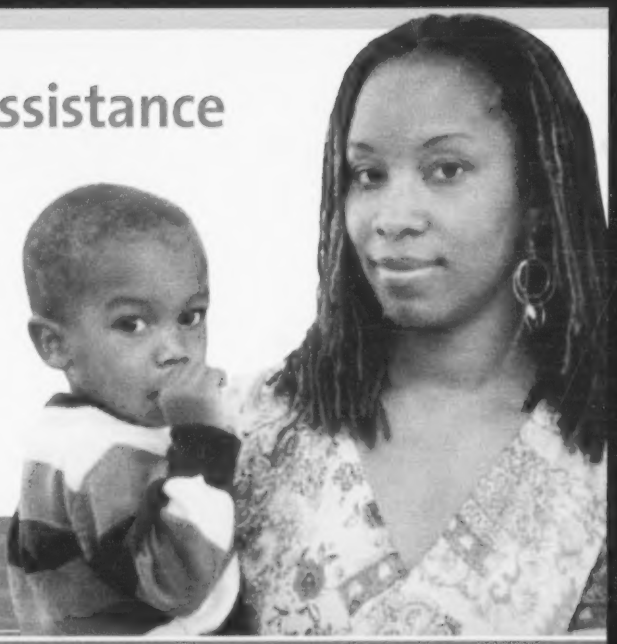
Employment and Income Assistance

for Single Parents





2013

Manitoba

INTRODUCTION

The Employment and Income Assistance Program (EIA) provides financial help to Manitobans who have no other way to support themselves or their families. For people who are able to work, EIA will help them go back to work by providing supports to employment.

This brochure provides general information on the program; how to apply; who should apply; and the rights and responsibilities that apply to you and the program. Everyone's situation is different, so if you need more details about what you may be able to get through EIA, contact your local EIA office.

HOW TO APPLY FOR EIA

For more information on how to apply for EIA, contact your local EIA office. Call EIA at 204-948-4000 in Winnipeg; toll free at 1-877-812-0014; TTY at 204-945-4796 or 1-800-855-0511 (Manitoba Relay Service); or go to our website:

Winnipeg: www.manitoba.ca/fs/eiawloc

Outside of Winnipeg: www.manitoba.ca/fs/eiarloc

After-hours emergency support may be available if you have a crisis that cannot wait until regular business hours. For emergency support, call 204-945-0183 in Winnipeg or toll free at 1-866-559-6778.

TO RECEIVE EIA AS A SINGLE PARENT:

- You live in Manitoba and are 18 years of age or older.
- You have custody of a dependent child or children or you are in your seventh, eighth or ninth month of pregnancy.
- You are unmarried, separated, divorced, widowed or have a spouse who is in prison.
- You are in financial need. (See below for more details.)

Financial Need

You may be eligible for assistance if the total cost of your or your family's monthly basic needs is more than your total financial resources. Your financial resources are based on your income and assets.

For EIA, the cost of basic needs is based on:

- the EIA basic allowance amount for your family size, the number of people in the family, their ages and relationships to each other
- the cost of your shelter, utilities and fuel
- the cost of some of your ongoing medical needs

Sources of Income

Your income may come from part of the money you earn from working, self-employment, child or spousal support payments, rent or room and board amounts paid to you, allowances, pensions, insurance benefits, financial settlements from an injury or lawsuit, business or farm profits, interest, dividends, sponsorship payments, inheritances, windfalls (winnings) or income in-kind.

EIA does not count some income as your financial resources. Some examples are:

- part of the money you earn from working (see Earnings Exemption section for details)
- part of rent or room and board paid to you
- occasional gifts up to $100 per person
- foster home maintenance payments
- Canada Child Tax Benefit
- Universal Child Care Benefit
- tax credit refunds
- Manitoba Prenatal Benefit Program benefits
- earnings of children who are in school or an EIA-approved program, full-time

Financial Assets

Your assets may be cash, money in bank accounts, investments, bonds, insurance policies, property or real estate, collections or valuables, trust funds or vehicles.

EIA does not count some assets as your financial resources. Some examples are:

- any money (called 'liquid assets') up to $4,000 per person to a maximum of $16,000 per family
- your main home (called a 'primary residence'), automobiles and other essential property
- children's trust funds up to $25,000
- Registered Education Savings Plans
- approved Individual Development Accounts

These are only examples. Staff can tell you what income and assets affect you.

Single Grants for Medical Equipment and Supplies

If you can pay for your basic living costs, but cannot afford to pay for your family's health needs, you may be eligible for health care costs.

MANITOBA BENEFITS

Income support

EIA and the federal government provide benefits as listed in the table to the right.

EIA provides benefits to help with the costs of things that are necessary for your health and well-being. You decide how to spend your total income on things like shelter, food, clothing, personal needs and household supplies.

EIA will also pay actual costs for your utilities (water, hydro and fuel), if they are not already included in your rent.

Some goods and services cost more in Northern Manitoba; EIA provides the Northern Allowance to cover some of the extra costs.

TOTAL MONTHLY TAX-FREE INCOME*
Provincial plus Federal Benefits for Non-Disabled Single Parents

Number of Children	Age of Children			Provincial	Federal	Total Income
	12-17	7-11	0-6**			
No Children	-	-	-	$678	$22	$700
1	1	-	-	$854	$360	$1,214
	-	1	-	$816	$360	$1,176
	-	-	1	$803	$460	$1,263
2	2	-	-	$1,070	$655	$1,725
	-	2	-	$995	$655	$1,650
	-	-	2	$957	$855	$1,812
	1	1	-	$1,032	$655	$1,687
	-	1	1	$982	$755	$1,737
	1	-	1	$1,019	$755	$1,774
3	3	-	-	$1,274	$950	$2,224
	-	3	-	$1,160	$950	$2,110
	-	-	3	$1,097	$1,250	$2,347
	2	1	-	$1,236	$950	$2,186
	2	-	1	$1,223	$1,050	$2,273
	-	2	1	$1,147	$1,050	$2,197
	1	2	-	$1,198	$950	$2,148
	1	-	2	$1,160	$1,150	$2,310
	-	1	2	$1,122	$1,150	$2,272
	1	1	1	$1,185	$1,050	$2,235

* Effective July 2013, provincial benefits include EIA. Federal benefits may include the Goods and Services Tax credit, Canada Child Tax Benefit, National Child Benefit Supplement and Universal Child Care Benefits. Some federal benefit amounts are subject to change. Visit www.servicecanada.gc.ca/ for more information.

** The Universal Child Care Benefit pays $100 per month for every child under six. Federal benefit amounts in the chart should be reduced by $100 for a family with a six-year-old child.

+ Amounts provided to single, expectant mothers in their seventh, eighth or ninth month of pregnancy.

Along with income support, you may qualify for other benefits up to EIA guideline amounts:

Health Needs

- **Addictions treatment** – help with some of the costs for treatment for an addiction (ex: travel, child care or shelter)
- **Ambulance service** – ambulance costs for an emergency
- **Chiropractic (back and spine) treatment** – help if you need more chiropractic appointments than are covered by Manitoba Health. Before EIA pays for extra costs, the Chiropractic Review Panel must look at your request and approve payment before you make an appointment with the chiropractor.
- **Dental services** - basic dental care costs such as exams, cleaning and extractions. You must be getting EIA for three months before you get this benefit, unless there is an emergency.
- **Eye (optical) services** - eye exam costs every two years; new glasses every three years; new lenses if your eyesight changes a lot. You must be getting EIA for three months before you get this benefit, unless there is an emergency.
- **Foot care (podiatry) services** – podiatry or chiropody and approved foot care equipment and services
- **Hearing aids** – cost of hearing aids and repairs
- **Medical equipment and supplies** – costs for basic and essential medical equipment and supplies that are not covered under Home Care or any other health plan
- **Mobility equipment (devices) and repairs** – cost of approved items that are not covered by the Manitoba Wheelchair Program
- **Prescription drugs** – approved prescription medication costs. You will receive the same coverage as provided by Pharmacare, but you will not pay a deductible.
- **Phones for health or safety** – the cost of a phone, only if it is needed for health or safety reasons
- **Prescription food supplements** – the cost of nutritional supplements if prescribed by a doctor

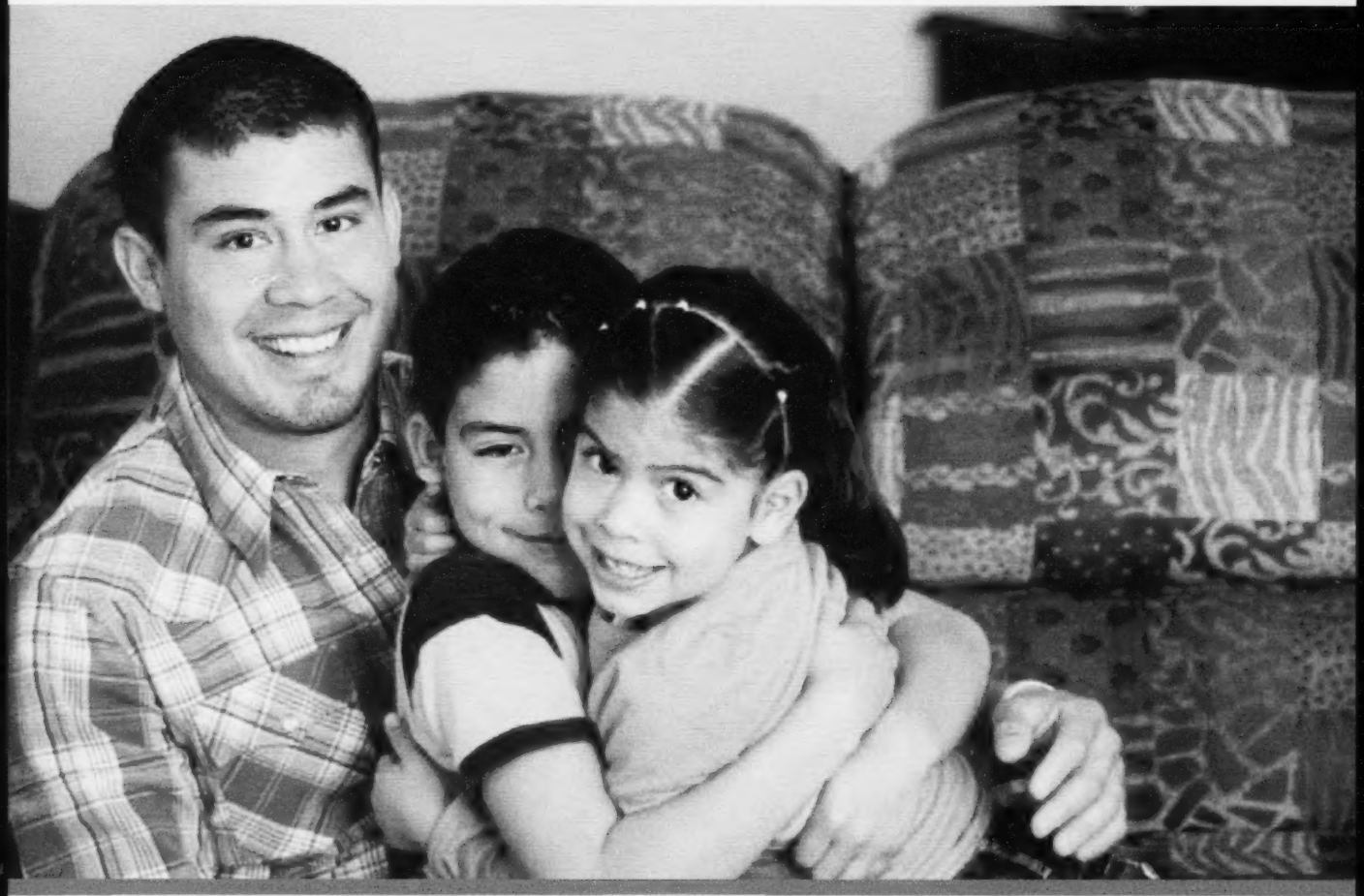
- **Prosthetic and orthotic devices** – cost of approved items that are not covered by Manitoba Health
- **Special diet allowance** – the cost of therapeutic (special) diets if needed because of a medical problem
- **Transportation for medical appointments** – the cost of getting to and from medical appointments
- **Winter boots** – up to $100 every three years for winter boots if needed because of a medical problem

Other Benefits

- **Additional costs for newborn children** – helps with the extra costs of a newborn baby (ex: crib, layette). Assistance may be up to $250 for the first-born child and up to $75 for each child after the first-born.
- **Appliance repairs** – help with the cost of repairs to a washing machine, refrigerator or stove
- **Beds and bedding** – help with the costs of beds and bedding (a mattress, box spring and frame for each person in the home every seven years; new bedding every three years)
- **Child care for employment, education and special needs** – help with child care costs when you work, are in school or training
- **Funeral service** – help for the cost of a funeral or service
- **Funeral transportation** – help with the cost of travelling to and from the funeral of an immediate family member
- **Home repairs** – help with the cost of needed home repairs if you own your home
- **Moving costs** – help with moving costs in special cases (ex: home is unsafe; a change in family size; finding lower rent; moving closer to a job or training)
- **Northern energy costs** – helps cover the higher cost of electricity, fuel, etc. in northern and remote communities
- **Replacing identification (for reasons approved by EIA)** – if identification is lost, stolen, or destroyed, EIA may cover the cost of getting new identification cards (for health, social services, funding, getting or keeping a job)

- **Restaurant meals** – helps cover the cost of meals if you can't store or cook food in your home (ex: you live in a unit without a fridge or hot plate)
- **School supplies for dependent children** – covers some of the cost of school supplies for dependent children (under 18) who go to school full-time. The amount of assistance depends on the age of the child; $60/year for 5 – 11 year olds, $80/year for 12-13 year olds and $100/year for 14 – 17 year olds.
- **Security deposits** – covers some of the cost for damage or security deposits for your home
- **Start-up allowance** – if furnishings are not included in the rent, a one-time payment of up to $500 can help with the cost of basic furnishings - available only if:
    - your furnishings were accidentally ruined (ex: fire, flood)
    - you have a disability and are moving from an institution or from your parents' home (ex: basic or special furniture for your room)
    - you are a separated single parent and cannot get any of the furnishings from your other home
    - you are a new single parent, moving out of your parents' home into your own (ex: basic furnishings to get started)
- **Transportation to get children to child care** – may cover the cost of transportation for your children to get to and from child care when you work or are in school or for other reasons approved by EIA

Staff can provide more details on these benefits.



Direct Deposit

EIA will deposit your benefits directly into your bank or credit union. Direct deposit is automatic, reliable, safe and secure. Speak to staff for more information.

Employment Assistance

Most EIA participants must look for work. This is called a "work expectation." Here is what you should know about your responsibilities and the help staff can provide.

Parents are expected to prepare for and look for work when all their children are at least two years old. EIA staff will help you set and carry out an action plan that matches your needs and abilities, and is right for you and your family. EIA can also help with employment and training programs, self-employment, benefits and services.

EIA may provide extra money to help you with your approved action plan. It may help with:

- child care expenses
- work expenses like work clothing or work boots
- telephone costs, if needed for a job
- up to $25 per month for miscellaneous expenses, when you're in an approved training program
- $100 *Rewarding Work* Allowance per month, for each adult who works full-time and $50 per month for part-time workers

If your situation changes, or you are having problems with your action plan, you must talk to staff about changing it. If you have a work expectation and do not try to find work, or use your action plan, your EIA benefits may be affected.

Rewarding Work

Rewarding Work is a group of programs and benefits that help people move from EIA to work. ***Rewarding Work*** increases the benefits of working.

Get Ready!

Under the Get Ready! policy, you may continue to receive EIA benefits while you attend a training or education program for up to four years. Your plan will be developed based on the help or training you need to find a job that will support you and your family.

Earnings Exemption

EIA is designed to ensure you will always have more money when you work. The earnings exemption allows you to keep the first $200 of your net monthly earnings. It also allows you to keep 30 per cent of any amount you earn over $200, before your EIA benefits are reduced.

An Income Declaration Statement is mailed to you each month. This is a form you must fill out after you get your last pay for the month. You must also attach your original pay stubs and child care receipts and send everything to the address listed on the form. After staff have this information, they will work out how much you will receive from EIA.

Leaving EIA

You may be eligible for some benefits as you move to work, or a training program funded by the department and no longer receive EIA.

- ***Rewarding Work*** Get Started! payment is a one-time amount given to people who move from EIA to work. Single parents receive a one-time payment of $250.
- ***Rewarding Work*** Health Plan gives prescription drug, dental and optical benefits for up to two years for eligible single parents and their children who move from EIA to work or who start receiving a living allowance while attending a training program funded by the department.

YOUR RESPONSIBILITIES UNDER EIA

To receive EIA, you must:

- Complete the Application, Employment History and Personal Action Plan forms.
- Provide identification and/or documents to show the information on the forms is accurate.

Your application/eligibility for EIA may be affected if:

- You have recently quit, were fired or refused a job without good reason.
- You have an outstanding warrant for certain serious offences.

Once you start receiving EIA benefits you must:

- **Complete Annual Review** forms once a year to show you are still eligible for EIA. You will receive this form in the mail.
- **Do interviews with staff**, from time to time, to show you are still eligible for EIA and to discuss your action plan.
- **Make reasonable efforts to get and use all other financial resources** available to you and your family (ex: federal benefits, child or spousal support or pensions).
- **Immediately report all changes** in your family, living arrangements, address, income or assets to staff.
- **Meet the terms of any work expectations,** if they apply to you.
- **Repay all overpayments** you may have, even after you leave EIA. An overpayment occurs when you receive more than what you should have received. If you are responsible for the overpayment, EIA may recover it from you through reduced EIA payments, Canada Revenue Agency's Refund Set-Off Program or a lien against property you own.
- **Repay what EIA pays for the principal of your mortgage, back taxes on property or major house repairs.** A lien can be put on your property that allows EIA to collect the repayment when you sell your property or if you refinance your house.

Common-Law Unions

People who live as common-law partners and receive EIA are treated as married couples; both their income and assets are considered when working out benefit amounts.

You are considered married or living common-law, if you:

- tell EIA that you are married
- tell EIA that you have a common-law partner
- live with the mother or father of your children
- live with someone who must support you or your children because of a court order or private agreement
- have lived with someone for at least three months and staff see that you are in a common-law relationship

For the purposes of EIA, you are in a common-law relationship if you live with another adult and have shared family, social or financial factors with that person.

In all cases, you are responsible for telling EIA staff of any changes to the people living in your home. See the brochure called "Married or Common-Law?" for more information.

Appeals

Speak to staff if you disagree with a decision made about your income support or benefits. Staff will review the decision with you. If you still disagree, you may speak to the supervisor of your EIA office. You also have the right to appeal the decision. You have 30 days after the decision is made to file your appeal in writing. An independent group called the Social Services Appeal Board will then schedule an appeal hearing to review your case. You can present your case at the hearing or ask someone to speak for you. Staff can provide you with more information on the appeal process.

You may appeal these decisions:

- not being allowed to apply or re-apply for income assistance
- being made to wait too long for a decision after you applied for income assistance or an increase in income assistance
- having your application for income assistance denied
- having your income assistance cancelled, suspended, changed or withheld
- not receiving enough income assistance

Social Services Appeal Board
175 Hargrave Street – 7th Floor Winnipeg, MB R3C 3R8
Telephone (Winnipeg): 204-945-3003
Toll free: 1-800-282-8069
Website: www.gov.mb.ca/fs/ssab/index.html

OTHER ASSISTANCE FOR LOW-INCOME MANITOBANS

You may be eligible for other programs.

Provincial Programs

- Early Learning and Child Care Program – Child Care Subsidy
- Manitoba Child Benefit
- RentAid
- 55PLUS

For more information on these or other provincial programs, contact Manitoba Family Services and Labour, Provincial Services Office at 204-945-2197 in Winnipeg; toll free 1-877-587-6224; e-mail provservic@gov.mb.ca; or go to wwww.manitoba.ca/fs.

- Pharmacare is a drug benefit program for Manitobans whose incomes are seriously affected by high prescription drug costs.

For more information on Pharmacare, contact Manitoba Health – Provincial Drug Programs at 204-786-7141 in Winnipeg; toll free 1-800-297-8099; or e-mail pharmacare@gov.mb.ca.

Federal Programs

- Employment Insurance
- Working Income Tax Benefit
- Goods and Services Tax Credit
- Canada Child Tax Benefit
- National Child Benefit Supplement
- Universal Child Care Benefit
- Canada Pension Plan
- Old Age Security/Guaranteed Income Supplement

For more information on these and other federal programs, contact Service Canada at 1-800-O-CANADA (1-800-622-6232); or go to www.servicecanada.gc.ca.

A copy of *The Employment and Income Assistance Act*, the Employment and Income Assistance Regulation and the administrative manual are available through your local EIA office or online at www.manitoba.ca/fs/manuals/eia/index.html.

Employment and Income Assistance

204-948-4000 in Winnipeg • 1-877-812-0014 toll free

www.gov.mb.ca/tce/eia

Alternate formats available upon request.